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CONSERVATION AND THE CONTINUITY OF AMERICAN LIBERALISM,

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CONSERVATION AND THE CONTINUITY OF AMERICAN LIBERALISM,

1939 -- 1953

Conservation during the liberal era of 1933-1953 was characterized by paradox. Both the Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman administrations ranked conservation among their most important domestic programs. But the Truman administration departed sharply from, and even reversed, the two distinctive elements of the New Deal conservation program -- structural awareness and a balance between development and preservation. By 1953 the liberal conservation program more nearly resembled that of the putative conservative Dwight D. Eisenhower administration than that of the New Deal. The paradox of a liberal administration overturning the legacy of its liberal predecessor represents a major problem in the history of conservation. And because of the importance of conservation to the liberal domestic program from 1933 to 1953, this episode also raises questions about the continuity of liberalism from the New Deal through the Fair Deal. An explanation of this paradox and what it may suggest for an understanding of liberalism is the subject of this essay. The strategy of the essay is to examine the key New Deal conservation programs in the federal agency with the broadest conservation program, the Department of the Interior, to follow their course from 1939 through the Truman administration, and to compare briefly the liberal conservation program at the end of the Truman administration with that of the Eisenhower regime. The essay will also relate the shifts in conservation to some changes in politics and ideology and suggest modifications in prevailing interpretations of liberalism.¹

By 1933 liberals and conservatives shared a minimum conservation consensus. There was widespread agreement that rational, efficient, expert management of natural resources by the federal government was desirable because it laid the foundation for long-term economic growth and national power. Both political camps also approved protecting at least a minimum number of the greatest scenic wonders. Forged during the progressive era, this consensus was confirmed and institutionalized, despite such untoward episodes as the Teapot Dome scandal, during the business-oriented administrations of 1921-1933. Since conservation has tended to flower best during periods of reform, it was not surprising that the New Deal would reinvigorate the conservation movement.²

The New Deal infused the conservation consensus with two distinctive elements that reflected broad characteristics of 1930s liberal thought and politics. The first component might be labeled "structural awareness." The structuralist argument called for the federal government to use conservation policy to modify the skewed distribution of economic and political power in America. New Deal thought traced the root of the depression to the maldistribution of income and held that economic recovery required government efforts to stimulate purchasing power among the lower income sectors. New Dealers varied widely on the extent and nature of change that was necessary. Some believed that making opportunity more nearly equal would be sufficient; others more to the left thought the federal government should go further and guarantee greater equality of result. Structuralist conservationists adopted the latter position. They were heavily influenced by the idea of economic maturity, which held that the diminution of previous

opportunities for economic growth and social mobility, such as free land, had caused the economy to reach stagnation and then depression. The economic maturity concept implied an economy of scarcity and slow or nonexistent economic growth, and hence encouraged emphasis on planning and redistribution. Since the pie could not be enlarged very much, it had to be resliced. This argument contended that the agency closest to an overall outlook, the federal government, should regulate the use of natural resources to insure a future supply, should carry out extensive development itself, and should tailor regulation and development to promote the redistribution of social and economic power. The 1930s conservationist vision borrowed heavily from the collectivist thinking of that era.³

The application of these ideas might be grasped in this "ideal type" example. A federally funded regional reclamation project would promote wise resource use; it would bar private profit from public resources through federal development and distribution of electricity; it would encourage redistribution of economic and political power by providing irrigation water to small farmers instead of large landowners; and in so doing it would foster democratic, more egalitarian, and more community-oriented life.

As this example suggests, New Deal conservation policy went beyond the predominantly material concerns of the structuralist ideal and tried to foster citizens' spiritual awareness. The spiritual aspect found expression particularly in the second distinctive characteristic of New Deal conservation policy: a balance between development and preservation of nature. The New Deal is often, and mistakenly, identified

mainly with the welfare state. Paradoxically during an economic depression, many liberals understood that human needs encompassed more than economic concerns, and they supported activities, such as the federal arts projects, that were directed toward spiritual growth. Natural areas afforded psychological regeneration for Americans, conservationists emphasized. Moreover, Interior Department conservationists such as Robert Marshall had an incipient understanding of ecology and the necessity of moderating man's developmental urge in order to fit into the web of nature. Conservation had been a divided stream, bedeviled by the conflict between developers, such as Gifford Pinchot, and preservationists, such as John Muir. New Deal conservation made important strides toward bringing the two factions into balance. By emphasizing nonmaterial values and sufficiency instead of economic expansion, the combination of structural and balance components presented a potentially radical challenge to the dominant individualistic capitalist social structure. In its fullest expression, 1930s conservation envisioned an ecological, cooperative commonwealth.⁴

New Deal conservation depended for its success on strong support from the executive branch, particularly the president and the secretary of the Interior. President Roosevelt, who once listed his occupation as "tree farmer," was perhaps even more conservation-minded than his presidential cousin, Theodore Roosevelt. FDR's papers show daily personal involvement in a wide array of conservation matters. A strong preservationist, he ordered a special photographic survey so that he could personally demarcate the boundary of the new Olympic National Park in Washington. He halted the introduction of nonnative

flora and fauna into the Okefenokee swamp and lamented, "Why, oh why, can't we let original nature remain original nature!" An "instinctive collectivist" (to use Otis Graham Jr.'s term), Roosevelt showed a strong interest in structural issues, notably planning and redistribution. While cognizant of the antimonopoly and yardstick properties of the Tennessee Valley Authority concept, he seemed to be more excited by the community planning vision. He argued that federal irrigation projects should be undertaken "not for the benefit of the man who happens to own the land at the time," but to provide small tracts that would "give first chance to the 'Grapes of Wrath' families of the nation." The president envisioned a comprehensively planned Columbia Basin project that could support 80,000 new families in agriculture and 20,000 others in small agriculture-related industries. In the crowded last months of his life, Roosevelt began planning for an international conservation conference that would represent the culmination of his lifelong interest in the field.⁵

Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, a Chicago lawyer, Bull Mooser, and veteran of numerous reform causes, went beyond Roosevelt's outlook. The "old curmudgeon" entertained an abiding suspicion of private interests who wanted to convert public resources to their own gain. A fervent antitrusteer, he championed federal power development. Believing the United States would eventually turn socialist, he would gladly have declared the oil industry a public utility. Ickes' interest in comprehensive regional planning led him to make river valley authorities one of his prime objectives. The secretary aligned himself with the preservationist camp of conservation, defending existing national parks from developers and searching out additional areas for inclusion in the park

and wildlife refuge system. An unabashedly stubborn empire builder, Ickes transformed his once scandal-ridden, unimaginative department into a dynamic agency that sailed in the vanguard of New Deal liberalism.⁶

Conservation has been peculiarly the concern of the executive branch, which usually is more cognizant of overall national policy and more attuned to expert management. Congress was usually more responsive to regional economic interests, especially because of the outsized influence of Westerners in the Senate. Congressional support of the New Deal conservation program was nonetheless substantial, although, with the rise of the conservative coalition in 1937-1938, that support became increasingly limited to specific development programs. Congress thwarted some of the executive branch's more expansive plans, such as the "seven little TVAs" and Ickes' attempt to put much of southeastern Utah into one spectacular national park. While Congress by itself seldom could implement or substantially redirect conservation policy, the legislature had considerable power to obstruct and dilute. Thus three props undergirded the success of New Deal conservation: the economic and intellectual conditions of the 1930s, strong executive leadership, and an acquiescent and sometimes enthusiastic Congress. Changes in all three supports in the 1940s would have serious consequences for the stability of the New Deal conservation platform.⁷

New Deal conservation concepts were translated into as significant a record of programs as any in American conservation history. The dimensions of the program may be seen most clearly by looking at conservation in 1939, when most programs were underway and not yet distorted by war. Structural changes proved far-reaching. The government's share of electricity generated in the country was mushrooming, from 1.6 percent

in 1937 to 12.7 percent in 1944. Bureau of Reclamation dams, such as Bonneville, Grand Coulee, and Shasta, claimed a large share of that increase; during the war the bureau recorded 84 percent of the increase in power-generating capacity in the western United States. As those projects moved towards completion, the issues of how their benefits would be distributed, which was more significant than yards of concrete or millions of kilowatts, assumed urgency. Bolstered by the Reclamation Project Act of 1939, which gave public bodies preference for electricity from reclamation dams, the department began formulating a strong pro-public position on distribution of power. The Interior Department now exercised control over two realms of the public domain -- grazing and fishing -- where planning and redistributive questions arose. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 had established federal control over the previously unregulated 142 million acres of the public domain. (Ickes' eagerness to acquire the public grazing lands for his department and begin their rehabilitation contrasted sharply with the Herbert Hoover administration's attempt to turn over control of the public lands to the states.) The management of commercial fisheries in Alaska was transferred to the department from the Department of Commerce in 1939. The Interior Department had also honored its obligation to preserve. Several national parks -- including four predominantly wilderness parks, Olympic, Kings Canyon, Big Bend, and Everglades -- had been established, along with a host of national monuments and wildlife refuges. The department's record in 1939 showed it was possible to balance dynamic programs of development and preservation.⁸

The Interior Department's activities were representative of

conservation activities in other agencies. Public power made great strides in the Rural Electrification Administration and Tennessee Valley Authority, although the regional planning and redistributive ethos had slipped as David Lilienthal gained ascendance over the first TVA chairman, community-minded Arthur Morgan. The Civilian Conservation Corps planted hundreds of millions of trees and rehabilitated millions of acres of land, and the Soil Conservation Service began reversing soil erosion and attempted to implement land-use planning. More than eleven million acres were added to federal forestry management, and the Forest Service considered bringing private forest lands under its planning jurisdiction. The National Resources Planning Board engaged in impressive long-range planning studies. A host of other agencies, such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Farm Security Administration, embraced a strong conservation dimension as part of their community programs.⁹

For all its accomplishments, New Deal conservation also had serious shortcomings. Interdepartmental feuding -- notably between the departments of the Interior and Agriculture over the Forest Service and between Ickes and Lilienthal over valley authorities -- undermined a comprehensive program. Flawed legislation, such as the Taylor Grazing Act, allowed the interests subject to government regulation too large a hand in the administration of the measure. Some Interior Department officials, principally in the Grazing Service and Fish and Wildlife Service, were more responsive to their client industries than to the New Deal ideal. In some cases, particularly in the public power and excess land issues of the Bureau of Reclamation, Ickes would have had greater possibilities for success had he taken an earlier interest.

Roosevelt at times stopped short of what conservationists wanted, particularly in structural change. Some conservation ideals were met more by intention than by final decision; measured against ideals, conservation in the 1930s was, as Paul Conkin observed of the New Deal at large, "an ever recurring story of what might have been."¹⁰

Despite those shortcomings, however, the conservation- and community-minded liberals gave the New Deal a distinctive leaven. Many New Dealers had more limited concerns, chiefly a rudimentary welfare state. But a preoccupation with the New Deal's limits has obscured the far-reaching, at times radical, possibilities it entertained. Because history is often written from the viewpoint of the victors, or at least the survivors, the New Deal has tended to be viewed through the fore-shortening lens of the narrower Fair Deal. Even if the New Deal goals had entailed fewer programs and supporters, their intellectual and ideological significance would demand prominent attention in any assessment of the continuity of liberalism. And it is important to remember the New Deal benchmark, in both achievement and intention, in order to make an accurate measurement of Fair Deal conservation.¹¹

The New Deal conservation program faced new dangers during the defense buildup of 1940-1941 and World War II. "Dr. Win the War" upstaged "Dr. New Deal"; abundance replaced scarcity as the sine qua non of the economy. Some developmental projects, such as dams that contributed power to the war effort, gained impetus. The demand for increased production threatened the preservationist branch of conservation. Grazing interests wanted to run stock in the national parks, as they had been allowed to do during World War I; Ickes flatly refused. The lumber and aircraft industries demanded to cut the superb stands of

Sitka spruce in Olympic National Park to build war planes. The secretary instead directed the industries to forests in British Columbia and Alaska, which were less accessible but outside the park system. The National Park Service suffered budget cuts during the war. But most significantly the principle of keeping nature in its original state was upheld. The parks even gained a major addition when Roosevelt signed an executive order conferring national monument status on the Jackson Hole country in Wyoming. Congress voted to rescind the action but FDR pocket-vetoed the measure; then Congress refused to appropriate funds to operate the monument. The president and secretary persisted, however, and Jackson Hole remained safe from commercial development until its status could be resolved in later years. Roosevelt and Ickes held the line for preservation and even managed an advance despite the unpropitious times.¹²

The structural side of conservation also came under attack. The demand for maximum production led Ickes to defer his plans to correct abuses in fisheries and grazing management until after the war. Meanwhile he fended off the efforts of the livestock industry, led by Senator Pat McCarran of Nevada, to transfer effective control of public-domain grazing to the large stockmen. Some legislators attacked the Bureau of Reclamation's excess land law, a redistributive measure that provided water for not more than 160 acres under one person's ownership and raised the possibility of forcing sales of larger holdings. The department beat back amendments that would have crippled the law in the Central Valley project in California, and mapped plans for strict enforcement of the measure as the first units of the project approached completion. In 1943 the department secured legislation to implement the

excess land law in the Columbia Basin project by acquiring title to lands to be irrigated and then dividing it among small farmers. Public power won a victory in 1944 when Congress authorized the secretary to acquire some transmission lines and related facilities in order to insure federal control over distribution of power from its dams. Departmental planners used the war period to complete some of their most comprehensive regional development plans. Despite serious threats, the department's actions during the war underscored a continuing commitment to structural change.¹³

The World War II experience was especially important, for it showed a liberal administration dealing with conditions similar to those that would prevail from 1945-1953. One of the supports of the New Deal conservation platform -- Congress -- had become increasingly hostile. Congressional opposition to New Deal conservation was nearly as severe as that which the Truman administration would face. (While the Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress repeatedly thwarted Truman, the Eighty-first Congress of 1949-1951 was more responsive to the executive branch than any since 1938.) The Roosevelt administration, however, stuck to its positions, mobilized political support for them, and guarded against their subversion by administrative subterfuges. The argument of "wartime necessity" could have been used to cloak retreat, but so long as the two other props -- liberal ideology and executive firmness -- held, the New Deal conservation program remained intact.

If left unchecked, however, the attacks on conservation, coupled with the emasculation of other New Deal programs such as the Farm Security Administration, portended an "agrarian counter-revolution,"

liberals feared. "It is the organized big men against the unorganized little men; the kulaks against the peasants; the haves against the have-nots," said Assistant Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman in 1943. Liberals took heart from FDR's enunciation of the Economic Bill of Rights in 1944. As the war drew to a close and Harry Truman assumed office in April 1945, they made restarting the New Deal engine their domestic priority. Ickes focused on structural issues: public power and public domain management.¹⁴

A firm position on public power had been evolving during the war. Power and water "must be produced and distributed to the people, without private profit," Abe Fortas, head of the division of water and power, said in 1941. Two years later the department renounced the pre-New Deal concept of power as a profit-making "cash crop" for reclamation and reduced its rates to public customers. Ickes formalized these ideas in a policy statement in January 1946. The department would actively assist the formation of cooperatives and other public bodies to distribute electricity, would build standby steam generating facilities in case the flow of power from dams was interrupted, and would string its own transmission lines to deliver power directly to preferred customers. He wanted the department to control power from stream to socket and entirely shortcircuit private firms. Ickes also sought Truman's support for valley authorities under the aegis of his department -- one in the Missouri, which FDR had strongly recommended in 1944, and another in the Columbia. The new president, however, was interested mainly in power generation with minimal social planning implications. He leaned to TVA-style administration in the Columbia and gave the Missouri short shrift.¹⁵

Public domain reform seemed possible in 1944-1945. Ickes appointed Clarence Forsling, a career Forest Service official who was anathema to McCarran and the stockmen, to head the Grazing Service in 1944. Forsling promptly proposed to triple fees, which had been frozen at an artificially low level during the war, and to redistribute permits in favor of smaller operators. He also outlined a range-rehabilitation program that would sharply reduce grazing on the overused range and convert the grazing-oriented administration into a comprehensive land management program. His antimonopoly instincts aroused, Ickes proposed to curb the abuses in the \$100-million-a-year Alaska fisheries he had inherited from the Department of Commerce. Several large Seattle-based food-processing firms held licenses for 75 percent of the salmon traps in the territory. These firms paid a pittance for using the public domain, engaged in overfishing that seriously depleted the resource, and placed small independent fisherman and cooperatives (many of them Alaska natives) at a grave disadvantage. Ickes announced hearings for late February 1946 as the first step toward the progressive elimination of the large firms' grip on the traps.¹⁶

But the attitudes of some of Ickes' liberal subordinates were shifting. The Fish and Wildlife Service argued that fisheries management should concern itself solely with maintaining resource abundance; the agency opposed redistribution of permits and other measures designed "to accomplish social objectives." In late 1945 all the Interior bureaus participated in a department-wide institute on postwar resources policy which revealed that doubts were mounting about the New Deal

legacy. Redistributive policies, such as the excess land law, encountered criticism; preservationists fell on the defensive as developers gathered momentum. The institute's unifying thread was not structural change but the contribution the department could make to economic expansion. The institute forecast a prominent theme of postwar liberalism. Liberals who wanted to stay in the Truman administration, such as Chapman, adapted to it; those who opposed the trend dropped out.¹⁷

Ickes' efforts to uphold the New Deal came to an abrupt end when he tangled with Truman in February 1946 over the nomination of oil millionaire Ed Pauley as under secretary of the navy. Pauley, "Honest Harold" revealed, had tendered "the rawest proposition ever made to me"; he would raise \$300,000 for the Democratic party in 1944 if the administration called off its suit to assert federal control of the "tidelands." The secretary's long memory reminded him that oil and the navy had mixed explosively at Teapot Dome. Ickes, furthermore, felt HST ignored him, and the failure to revive the New Deal in 1945-1946 dismayed him. He disliked most of Truman's cabinet choices, and they responded in kind. Clinton Anderson, secretary of agriculture from 1945-1948, called him a "self-appointed Jesus Christ with a conviction that he was the only honest man in the country . . . We all . . . hated Ickes cordially." On February 12, 1946, Ickes decided to "shake the dust of the administration from . . . my shoes," and resigned, effective March 31. Truman accepted the resignation and made it effective on February 15, 1946, just seventy-two hours later. For old New Dealers Ickes' departure capped a year in which Truman had seemed to move ever farther from the Roosevelt standard.¹⁸

Truman tried to repair the damage by wooing two Western liberals, Supreme Court justice and ardent preservationist William O. Douglas and Assistant Secretary Chapman, for the Interior post. But Douglas decided to stay on the court, and Chapman feared liberals would turn on him if he succeeded Ickes. Truman then chose Julius A. "Cap" Krug, who as chairman of the War Production Board from 1944-1946, had epitomized the cooperation between large industry and government that characterized wartime procurement and reconversion. A Milwaukee-born electric-power engineer, Krug had come under Lilienthal's influence while serving as chief engineer of TVA in the 1930s. Krug's TVA experience dovetailed with the Truman administration's growing interest in public power chiefly for production's sake; the new secretary worked hard for an independent Columbia Valley Authority with most of the teeth of planning and redistribution extracted. A protege of Bernard Baruch, Krug kept "quite a lively eye out to his business future," recalled one of his assistant secretaries, Warner Gardner. His administration, after an initial burst of energy, became "much more passive than Mr. Ickes'." Often absent from Washington for health and personal reasons, he confessed to Oscar Chapman, whom he made under secretary, "things go better when I am away."¹⁹

Krug's actions in public domain management etched the declining structural sensitivity even before the Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress was elected. He scuttled Forsling's ideas and adopted a plan drawn up at his request by Rex Nicholson, a former WPB official with close ties to the livestock operators. Fees

should be based not on the value of the resource or on livestock prices, Nicholson said, but solely on the cost of administration. He outlined in turn an undernourished Grazing Service of just 242 employees to administer 142 million acres -- an area almost half again as large as the State of California; this minimal force made possible low fees, which were increased from five cents to eight cents per animal unit month. Nicholson strengthened the role of the district advisory boards, which, as the livestock associations acknowledged privately, were chiefly composed of and responsible to the large stockmen. Tailored almost exclusively to stock-raising, the Nicholson plan ignored the importance of the public domain for diverse interests, such as wildlife, watersheds, wilderness, and recreation, that argued for a comprehensive management plan. Krug accepted the plan with only minor qualifications, and even allowed the industry to dictate the transfer of Forsling and three other officials out of the Grazing Service. The department faced stiff political pressure, as it had in World War II, but it now showed little inclination to fight the industry. Krug could have found allies in the conservation movement and especially in the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, which was scandalized by the low fees and slashed appropriations in retaliation. But the new secretary had assured stockraisers: "I don't think on any basic point there can be any real disagreement between us." It fell to the Eisenhower administration to change the fee structure to reflect the value of the resource.²⁰

In the Alaska fishing controversy Krug also retreated. The department first attempted a compromise, then abandoned efforts to

curb the deteriorating situation. Action finally was taken only when Alaska assumed control of the fishery upon statehood in 1958, but by then the resource had been seriously depleted and the distributive inequities perpetuated. Krug's first year indicated that he and his liberal subordinates were abandoning the structural stance that had characterized Ickes and the New Deal.²¹

The balance between development and preservation began to shift in favor of the utilitarians. Krug compared preservationists to a "hair shirt that the National Parks Service has worn, perhaps for the Nation's sins against conservation." He found the park service director, Newton Drury, an Ickes appointee, "nearly impossible to talk with because he has no business sense." In 1947 lumbermen again eyed the prime timber in Olympic National Park. Krug, somewhat surprisingly aided by Drury, tried to placate them by agreeing to delete 56,000 acres from the reserve. But conservation groups, abetted by liberal luminaries such as Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Harold Ickes, mobilized to preserve the park. When the chairman of the House Interior Committee, Richard Welch of California, opposed the cuts, Krug reversed himself and began defending the park's inviolability. In the Jackson Hole controversy Krug and Drury appeared willing to abandon a crucial but controversial segment of the monument east of the Snake River. They decided to press for its inclusion, however, when John D. Rockefeller III, who had donated the land to the park system, insisted the parcel should stay in. In both Olympic and Jackson Hole the department had supported the conservation balance only when it felt preservationists' political pressure.²²

To his credit Krug could cite some successful holding actions, if few new programs. He had furthered plans for the Columbia Valley Authority, and he had vigorously defended reclamation officials who had been traduced for their supposed devotion to the excess land law. Liberal apologists with some justification attributed the department's slippage to Krug's lax administrative habits and the recalcitrance of the Eightieth Congress. But these explanations could not obscure the suspicion that the ideas of the department liberals themselves were changing. They had made little attempt to nurture political support in the grazing controversy, and outside political pressure forced them back to the New Deal conservation position in the parks imbroglio. Some conservationists took hope when Krug's low profile during the Truman campaign in 1948 cost him his job. It appeared that, with a new secretary, Truman elected in his own right, and a Democratic Congress, New Deal conservation principles would be restored. Ironically those conditions from 1949 to 1953 made apparent the full extent of the liberal retreat.²³

Oscar L. Chapman, who succeeded Krug on December 1, 1949, enjoyed a reputation among contemporaries and historians as "one of the few authentic New Dealers left in the Cabinet." The new appointee's political consciousness had been formed in liberal Democratic politics in Denver, Colorado, in the 1920s, where he was a protege of crusading juvenile judge Ben Lindsey and Senator Edward P. Costigan. From 1933 to 1946 Chapman served as assistant secretary under Ickes. He identified with the most fervent New Dealers, maintained close ties with Eleanor Roosevelt, and worked hard for Henry Wallace's renomination as

vice president in the climactic liberal crusade of 1944. After the war, however, Chapman's ideas began to change. By 1947 he concluded that Wallace was dangerous and in 1948 Chapman was one of Truman's earliest and most devoted yeomen. A man who reflected others' ideas rather than putting his own stamp on them, Chapman epitomized the midcentury liberal as broker politician.²⁴

The new secretary's dominant refrain was the importance of natural resources development, especially public power, for economic growth in the service of national defense and the "permanent upbuilding of the West." Economic growth constituted "the very essence of our development as a nation," Chapman contended. "Conservation does not mean . . . the locking up of some resource in order to keep people from touching or using it. It means to develop the resource in a wise way." He stressed that resource development would provide the foundation of the "good life," which he interpreted almost exclusively in economic terms; he said little about preservation. His interest in structural change was diminishing as he downplayed comprehensive regional authorities and redistributive policies. Chapman at first supported some parts of Ickes' public power program, such as transmission lines and a steam plant in the Central Valley. But the core of his legislative program consisted of big dams in the Columbia Basin and on the Colorado River. To Chapman conservation had come to mean chiefly the federal government as builder of public works.²⁵

Chapman's position found reinforcement with the new president. Truman, throughout his political career, interpreted conservation mainly as dam-building for power and flood control and as some soil conservation programs to enhance farm production. The president preached the doctrine

of the federal government as developer, particularly on his campaign swings through the West, the region his strategists rated the "number one priority" in 1948. Wilderness to Truman was land that was nonproductive. He listened with boredom bordering on irritation to Ickes' pleas to save some prime groves of sugar pines. The president supported the Bureau of Reclamation's attempt to place a dam in the heart of Dinosaur National Monument with the comment: "It has always been my opinion that food for coming generations is much more important than bones of the Mesozoic period." The dam did not threaten the dinosaur remains; it was a spectacular canyon wilderness that was imperiled. Truman's indifference to the issues at stake contrasted sharply with the interest of his predecessor, who had brought the canyons into the park system. The attitudes of the executive branch, as represented by the president and secretary, indicated that, like the earlier deterioration of the congressional prop, another support of New Deal conservation had been weakened.²⁶

Now the third bolster, liberal ideology, completed the shift away from New Deal conservation ideas. The developmental emphasis reflected the preeminence midcentury liberal thought assigned to economic abundance. Economic growth seemed to be the answer that the successes of the World War II economy had provided for the New Deal's primary failure: its inability to end the depression. Midcentury liberals thought that the New Deal had introduced enough structural changes to make opportunity more nearly equal, except for certain minority groups, and that "countervailing powers" maintained the system in dynamic equilibrium. The wartime partnership between government and business rebuilt faith in

capitalism and particularly in large units, as exemplified in Lilienthal's Big Business: A New Era. The answer to the problem of lower sectors' lack of purchasing power seemed thus to lie not in further structural change but in raising all sectors' incomes through an expanding economy. These ideas found a political culmination in the doctrines of Leon Keyserling, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers from 1949-1953. He argued that cooperation between government and business for growth would avert depression, make possible a military buildup for a protracted Cold War, and obviate the need for income redistribution. In agricultural policies, for instance, production for abundance replaced the scarcity economics of the 1930s; the administration's most imaginative agricultural concept, the Brannan Plan, Truman pointed out, was "not intended to redistribute wealth." If the pie could be enlarged, it need not be resliced.²⁷

As Chapman applied the Truman administration's growth strategy, the structural side of conservation experienced further erosion. The Interior Department's support for a Columbia Valley Authority weakened. In May 1949 the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Corps of Engineers had signed the Newell-Weaver agreement that divided the choice dam sites of the Columbia Basin between the two feuding agencies. Krug had feared the agreement would sabotage the CVA. Chapman, however, hailed the pact as "a marked step forward" that would enable construction of dams to begin at once. "Consideration of the method of permanent administration . . . should not deter us from taking action now to implement desirable physical developments," he said. By dividing the Columbia Basin into two spheres the agreement virtually insured that a

valley authority, and the social policy such an agency might have pursued, was thwarted. Chapman continued to give lip service to the idea of a CVA, but he put most of his political muscle behind dam construction in Reclamation's half of the valley. A combination of congressional opposition and flagging administration support left the CVA proposal foundering, but the Bureau of Reclamation got the dams it wanted, except for Hells Canyon where, as events would prove, the forces of utilitarianism overreached themselves.²⁸

The department also sagged on the question of how federally generated power would be distributed in the Central Valley of California. After an attempt to build a steam generating plant and additional transmission lines had failed in Congress in 1949, Chapman agreed to a controversial settlement whereby the Pacific Gas & Electric Company, the largest private utility in the region, sent federal power to the final customers over the utility's transmission lines. Public power advocates, joined by the comptroller general, complained that the secretary had accepted unnecessarily onerous restrictions and allowed PG&E to make too large a profit from the deal. Most important, the agreement virtually precluded the formation of additional municipal or cooperative power districts. Chapman's decision reversed the position the department had taken from 1941 through 1946 by abandoning the effort to form cooperatives and to eliminate private profit from the marketing of public power.²⁹

The other key component of the Central Valley Project -- the excess land law -- was seriously weakened by administrative subversion. Chapman had declared in 1947: "I support without qualification the principle of family-size land holdings by independent farmers." Meanwhile, however, Reclamation commissioner Michael Straus had induced

the department solicitor to reinterpret reclamation law so that landowners of any size could escape the 160-acre limit. The reclamation bureau now began writing contracts which allowed landowners unlimited irrigation water if they paid the costs of construction on their property. Chapman approved several such contracts, although he protested that they were exceptions to a policy he still supported. But some liberals, such as University of California at Berkeley economist Paul S. Taylor, feared that the legal opinion and the contracts meant reclamation law was "as good as dead and buried." Taylor, Senator Paul H. Douglas of Illinois, the National Farmers Union, and many California politicians prevailed on Chapman to reverse these changes. Three days before leaving office Chapman voiced his support for the family farm, though without specifying an acreage limit. He did not give his words practical effect by revoking the contracts or the opinion. "What is present department policy?" puzzled members of the secretary's staff queried one another. "We certainly deserved better treatment from the avowed friends of acreage limitation," Douglas said. Taylor reflected: Ickes was "solid," Krug was "almost solid," and Chapman "wobbled." By the end of the latter's term the Central Valley and Columbia Basin projects stood as monumental engineering works, but with few of their structural possibilities realized. The solicitor's opinion and the contracts proved helpful to foes of the excess land law over the next quarter century as large landowners, often assisted by the bureau, continued to thwart the redistributive intent of reclamation law. In the three structural issues -- grazing, fishing, and power and water

from reclamation projects -- federal policy had come to support at least protection for the status quo and often publically funded subsidy for the larger interests. Chapman's stand on structural issues by 1953 made him scarcely recognizable as the defender of the "have-nots" against the "haves" in 1943.³⁰

As resource development projects grew, the preservationist side of conservation was increasingly overshadowed. Chapman defended the integrity of the park system status quo when threats arose from outside the department, but expansion of park and wilderness areas received little attention. The secretary approved a somewhat questionable compromise in the Jackson Hole controversy which combined that troubled region with Grand Teton National Park. Truman added a worthwhile but small tract to Olympic National Park, bringing it near the expanse authorized in the 1930s. The Truman administration, however, was the only one, except for the much briefer John F. Kennedy regime, between Grover Cleveland's and Gerald Ford's that failed to add a park. Outstanding units established since 1953, such as Canyonlands in Utah, North Cascades in Washington, and Redwoods in California, suggested that interest in preservation would have paid dividends for the Truman administration.³¹

Instead liberal developers provoked the most serious crisis the park system ever faced. By 1950 the Bureau of Reclamation's share of the departmental budget soared to a new high of 61 percent. The agency was putting the finishing touches on its grandest development, the Upper Colorado Basin Project (UCB), a string of dams and related facilities on the Colorado River and its tributaries. The largest dam, Glen Canyon, would create a 186-mile-long lake in the area Ickes had proposed for the Escalante monument; but since that stretch of the Colorado had not come

into the park system and was then almost inaccessible, the dam aroused relatively little protest. What touched off a prolonged controversy were the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain dams, which would flood the heart of Dinosaur National Monument on the Colorado-Utah border. Originally created by President Woodrow Wilson to protect eighty acres of dinosaur relics, the monument had been enlarged to approximately 325 square miles by Franklin Roosevelt to preserve the spectacular canyons carved by the Green and Yampa rivers. Echo Park and Split Mountain dams challenged the park principle head-on and threatened the integrity of the entire park system, for the Reclamation Bureau and other agencies were drawing plans for dams in Glacier, Big Bend, Kings Canyon, and Grand Canyon national parks.³²

Straus contended that Echo Park-Split Mountain provided the optimum combination of water storage, minimum evaporation loss, economical development, and power-generation capacity for Western economic development. These themes appealed to Chapman. When questioned about the dams at his confirmation hearing in January 1950, he did not defend park inviolability but said each case had to be considered on its merits. He approved the dams on June 27, 1950, adopting Straus's economic arguments. "Dinosaur National Monument is potentially a good park unit," Chapman acknowledged in 1951. ". . . Yet, I am convinced that the growth and development of the West depends upon the adoption of a sound Upper Colorado River Basin Program, and that this is the most important consideration to be faced in this matter." Political considerations influenced Chapman in part; his approval of the dams was timed to coincide with the kickoff of the reelection campaign of Senator Elbert Thomas of Utah.

More broadly the Dinosaur monument decision fulfilled the developmentism that Truman had promised.³³

Scrapping the park principle backfired politically. Preservationists lobbied effectively against the dams. The Corps of Engineers and the Department of Agriculture filed studies that cast serious doubt on the Reclamation Bureau's engineering data and the economic feasibility of the dams. When this controversy, augmented by opposition from Easterners and fiscal conservatives, threatened to block the entire UCB program in Congress, Chapman began to waffle. He told preservationists that he hoped an alternative to Echo Park-Split Mountain could be found; then he assured developers he would still approve the dams if the alternatives proved inadequate. His final recommendation called for building "Echo Park or an alternative." Although Chapman modified his original declaration, he continued to make economic considerations, not park integrity, the touchstone of decision. The park system finally emerged victorious in 1955 when the Eisenhower administration accepted an agreement by Western senators to replace Echo Park-Split Mountain with an alternate site.³⁴

Developmental ambitions also imperiled the deepest canyon in the world, Hells Canyon of the Snake River. The \$356-million Hells Canyon Dam was the choicest site open to the Bureau of Reclamation in the Columbia River Basin; it would create a reservoir 93 miles long on the Idaho-Oregon border and boast a generating capacity of 1.6 million kilowatts, equal to 16 percent of the total in the federal hydroelectric system. "The compelling reasons for starting construction . . . immediately cannot be questioned," Chapman said in January 1952. The Hells

Canyon proposal became embroiled in a dispute between public and private power advocates, which staved off construction long enough for the growing preservation movement to succeed in stopping any dam at all. The Supreme Court, in a decision written by William O. Douglas in 1967, stalled construction on ecological grounds, and Congress later enacted legislation that preserved the gorge. The conservation balance had always been the central issue. Straus had sought Ickes' endorsement for the public power dam in 1951, but the former secretary rejoined that neither a private nor federal dam should impair Hells Canyon. Ickes' invigoration of the Bureau of Reclamation had been tempered by respect for preservation. Chapman's Dinosaur monument and Hells Canyon decisions revealed how far the conservation balance had shifted when the tension between development and preservation went slack.³⁵

The shift away from the New Deal in the Department of the Interior appears to have been representative of conservation policy in other departments during the Truman administration. Forgetting Theodore Roosevelt's admonition that "the bulk of government is not legislation but administration," historians of the Truman period have dealt mainly with legislation. They have tended to assume that programs enacted under the New Deal remained intact unless specifically reversed by Congress. The department's conservation record suggests, however, that further studies of administration would reveal that many New Deal programs continued in name but, because of administrative changes, now achieved quite different ends. Studies made thus far suggest strongly that, both administratively and legislatively, other conservation

agencies also retreated from their 1930s standards. The Rural Electrification Administration and the TVA did not match even the Interior Department's performance in public power. Soil Conservation Service relaxed its conservation efforts. By largely halting the cutback of permits on overgrazed land, the Forest Service in effect shifted the burden of financing range rehabilitation from the users to the public at large. Secretary of Agriculture Charles Brannan also directed the Forest Service to halt redistribution of grazing permits. Truman continued efforts begun by Ickes to assert federal control over the offshore oil lands, but his administration remained content with loose control of oil production and distribution in contrast to Ickes' comprehensive goals. Nor did the Truman administration attempt to revive the Civilian Conservation Corps or the comprehensive planning agencies of the New Deal.³⁶

The decline of both the structural and balance sensitivities of New Deal conservation followed naturally from the paradox of abundance. Economic growth represented a creative effort to deal with domestic and international situations that were very different from those of the 1930s. The danger for conservation, and perhaps for liberalism generally, arose from seeing abundance as a total solution, and from forgetting that the structural and balance concerns addressed by New Deal conservation are timeless issues. Economic growth made structural changes more possible but left liberals less aware of the need for them. Development increased the pressure on preservation but thereby made preservation all the more essential. Midcentury liberalism's fascination with abundance also suggests that the decline of the

New Deal cannot be ascribed merely to congressional opposition or outside political pressure. In several cases congressional and outside political forces forced liberals back towards the New Deal conservation standard.

Indeed the Truman administration may have shared more continuities with the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration than with the New Deal. The Truman-period settlements of structural issues in grazing and fishing management held throughout the regimes of secretaries Douglas McKay and Fred Seaton. The Eisenhower administration exhibited little more zest for enforcing the excess land law than had its predecessor, but it won affirmation of the law in an appeal to the United States Supreme Court. Despite rhetoric about federal-private "partnership" in power projects, the Eisenhower administration completed those projects started under Krug and Chapman and initiated many new ones, including the huge Upper Colorado Basin Project. The federal share of electricity generated in the nation increased from 13.2 percent in 1952 -- almost the same as in 1945 -- to 17.1 percent in 1958. The Republican administration found Chapman's power distribution compromises acceptable and left them intact. McKay and Seaton did not don the hair shirts of preservation, but they may have left a better record on the preservation balance than their predecessors. They avoided further threats to park boundaries, added Virgin Islands National Park, and started the Mission 66 program that brought about an overdue upgrading of park facilities.³⁷

The changes in conservation policy during the Truman years were part of a more general shift in liberal objectives within the Department of the Interior. Under Chapman the department directly

reversed the community-oriented Indian New Deal. In the Trust Territory of the Pacific the department fulfilled the New Deal goal of replacing military rulers with civil governance, but they neglected the measures New Dealers had desired to preserve community and Micronesian native culture. Chapman's Indian and territorial policies were followed for several years by the Eisenhower administration. Secretary Seaton modified them, however, in the late 1950s to bring them closer to New Deal goals. By midcentury the distinctive element of an important corps of New Dealers -- their structural and spiritual sensitivity -- had been largely abandoned.³⁸

To be sure, elements of continuity remained between New Deal and Fair Deal, principally in social welfare programs. Despite Truman's efforts few were enacted or significantly enlarged during his terms. The welfare programs in place in 1953 remained intact, and Eisenhower gave his blessing to several expansions of the welfare state.³⁹ The paradox of conservation from 1939-1953 helps explain the often noted and sometimes puzzling failure of the supposed conservatives in power from 1953 to 1961 to roll back the New Deal. Eisenhower could leave most of what he found of liberalism intact in part because Republicanism had been "modernized" and in part because a widespread consensus had come to support the welfare state. But the decline of New Deal conservation suggests another reason of perhaps greater significance. The Truman administration, and liberalism generally, had already abetted the removal of the New Deal's most far-reaching possibilities.

FOOTNOTES

1. Although some useful studies have been published on aspects of conservation policy from 1933 through 1961, there is no overall synthesis, and little attempt to relate conservation to changing facets of liberalism. The best study of an aspect of conservation from 1933 to 1961 is Elmo Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics: Resource Development and Preservation in the Truman-Eisenhower Era (Lexington, Ky., 1973), which analyzes the conflict between developers and preservationists from 1945 to 1961. In this essay liberalism may be taken to mean chiefly the domestic administrative and legislative programs of the Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman administrations. Where it is helpful in explaining changing liberal politics, liberal thought will also be referred to (see, for instance, on the 1930s, Richard Pells, Radical Visions and American Dreams [New York, 1973] and R. Alan Lawson, The Failure of Independent Liberalism, 1930-1941 [New York, 1971]).

2. Samuel P. Hays, Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency, 1890-1920 (New York, 1969); John Morton Blum, The Republican Roosevelt (New York, 1965), pp. 112, 115; Donald C. Swain, Federal Conservation Policy, 1921-1933 (University of California Publications in History, v. 76, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963).

3. Theodore Rosenof, Dogma, Depression, and the New Deal: The Debate of Political Leaders over Economic Recovery (Port Washington, N. Y., 1975); Paul N. Goldstone, The Collapse of Liberal Empire: Science and Revolution in the Twentieth Century (New Haven, 1977), p. 13; William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (New York, 1963), pp. 33-36, 84; Harold L. Ickes, The New Democracy (New York, 1934), pp. 78, 120.

4. Paul Conkin, Tomorrow a New World: The New Deal Community Program (Ithaca, N.Y., 1959); Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, pp. 345-346; Ickes, The New Democracy, pp. 38, 43, 72-73; Clayton R. Koppes, "From New Deal to Termination: Liberalism and Indian Policy, 1933-1953," Pacific Historical Review, XLVI (November 1977), forthcoming; Wilson Carey McWilliams, The Idea of Fraternity in America (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973), p. 550.

5. Edgar B. Nixon, ed., Franklin D. Roosevelt and Conservation, 1911-1945 (2 vol., Washington, 1957), §§ 204, 547, 635, 734, 960, 1133, 1165; Otis L. Graham Jr., Toward a Planned Society: From Roosevelt to Nixon (New York, 1976), pp. 20, 37-45; Roosevelt to Harold L. Ickes, Dec. 21, 1939, box 75, President's Secretary's File, Roosevelt Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York. There is no satisfactory overall study of New Deal conservation; an early attempt is Anna Lou Riesch, "Conservation under Franklin Roosevelt" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1952).

6. Linda Lear, "The Aggressive Progressive: The Political Career of Harold L. Ickes, 1874-1933," (Ph.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1974), pp. 330-350; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, pp. 1-18; Donald C. Swain, "The National Park Service and the New Deal, 1933-1940," Pacific Historical Review, XLI (1972), 330; Gerald D. Nash, United States Oil Policy, 1890-1964: Business and Government in Twentieth Century America (Pittsburgh, 1968), p. 180; Eugene Trani, The Secretaries of the Interior (Washington, 1975), pp. 246-263.

7. William E. Leuchtenburg, "Roosevelt, Norris and the 'Seven Little TVAs,'" Journal of Politics, XIV (1952), 418-441; Elmo Richardson, "Federal Park Policy in Utah: The Escalante National Monument Controversy of 1935-1940," Utah Historical Quarterly, XXXIII (Spring 1965), 109-133; see also James T. Patterson, Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal (Lexington, Ky., 1967).

8. Philip J. Funigiello, Toward a National Power Policy: The New Deal and the Electric Utility Industry, 1933-1941 (Pittsburgh, 1973), ch. 7-8; Donald C. Swain, "The Bureau of Reclamation and the New Deal, 1933-1940," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, LXVI (July 1970), 137-146; Charles E. Coate, "Water, Power and Politics in the Central Valley Project, 1933-1967" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California

at Berkeley, 1969), pp. 95-101; Electrical World, CXLI (Jan. 25, 1954), 167; E. Louise Pepper, The Closing of the Public Domain (Stanford, Calif., 1951), ch. 12; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, p. 8.

9. Thomas K. McCraw, TVA and the Power Fight, 1933-1939 (Philadelphia, 1971), pp. 37-38; Graham, Toward a Planned Society, pp. 38-40; Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, pp. 164-165; Funigiello, Toward a National Power Policy, p. 257; John A. Salmond, The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study (Durham, N.C., 1967), ch. 7.

10. Paul Conkin, FDR and the Origins of the Welfare State (New York, 1967), pp. 70-73; Funigiello, Toward a National Power Policy, pp. 269-270; Richard S. Polenber, Reorganizing Roosevelt's Government: The Controversy Over Executive Reorganization, 1936-1939 (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), ch. 5; Ickes manuscript diary, Oct. 30, 1935, pp. 1231-1232, Harold L. Ickes Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D. C.

11. The study that addresses the question of the continuity of liberalism from the 1930s to the 1950s most fully is Alonzo L. Hamby, Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism (New York, 1973). Hamby expounds the boldest interpretation of midcentury liberalism when he concludes not merely that the Truman administration "successfully

defended and institutionalized the New Deal" (p. 513), but that the administration, through its legislative accomplishments and abandonment of the Popular Front, moved liberalism "beyond the New Deal" (p. 516). Interpretations by other historians and political scientists also stress continuity, largely because they focus on mid-century liberalism's attempt to expand the social welfare programs of the New Deal. These views are generally less optimistic than Hamby but attribute the Truman administration's shortfall primarily to congressional opposition. Richard Kirkendall contends, for instance, that Truman tried to "build upon the liberalism of his predecessor" but inherited a "domestic deadlock" he could not break (Kirkendall, "Harry S. Truman," in Morton Borden, ed., America's Eleven Greatest Presidents [rev. ed., Chicago, 1971], pp. 277, 282). For other representatives of this interpretation see Richard E. Neustadt, "From FDR to Truman: Congress and the Fair Deal," reprinted in Frank Otto Gatell, Paul Goodman, and Allen Weinstein, eds., The Growth of American Politics (2 vol., New York, II, 1972), pp. 369-400; William E. Leuchtenburg, "A Troubled Feast," in Leuchtenburg, ed., The Unfinished Century: America Since 1900 (Boston, 1973), pp. 693-694; Dewey W. Grantham, The United States Since 1945: The Ordeal of Power (New York, 1976), ch. 3; Eric Goldman, The Crucial Decade -- and After: America, 1945-1960 (New York, 1960), p. 92. New Left and revisionist historians also suggest continuity; for them the failures of the Truman administration are those of FDR writ large. See, for example, Barton J. Bernstein, "America in War and Peace: The Test of Liberalism," in Bernstein, ed., Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American

History (New York, 1969), pp. 289-321. Exceptions to the continuity interpretations are Bert Cochran, Harry Truman and the Crisis Presidency (New York, 1973), and Samuel Lubell, The Future of American Politics (New York, 1952), pp. 21-27. For assessments of Truman-period domestic historiography see Harvard Sitkoff, "Years of the Locust: Interpretations of Truman's Presidency Since 1965," and Hamby, "The Clash of Perspectives and the Need for New Syntheses," both in Richard S. Kirkendall, ed., The Truman Period as a Research Field: A Reappraisal, 1972 (Columbia, Mo., 1974), Richard Polenberg, "Historians and the Liberal Presidency: Recent Appraisals of Roosevelt and Truman," South Atlantic Quarterly, LXXV (1976), 20-35; and Geoffrey S. Smith, "'Harry, We Hardly Know You': Revisionism, Politics and Diplomacy, 1945-1954," American Political Science Review, LXX (June 1976), 568-582. Some topical studies call into question the assumptions of New Deal-Fair Deal continuity. See Graham, Toward a Planned Society, ch. 3; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, esp. pp. 198-201; and Nash, United States Oil Policy, p. 201.

12. Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, pp. 11-13; Robert W. Righter, "The Brief, Hectic Life of Jackson Hole National Monument" American West XIII (1976), 30-33.

13. Ickes to Harry Barnes, Aug. 16, 1944, File 8-3, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Record Group 48,

National Archives; Minutes, meetings of Advisory Committee on Policy in Connection with the Central Valley Project, March 18, 21, 1944, box 98, Joel D. Wolfsohn Files, Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 49, NA; Peffer, Closing of the Public Domain, ch. 15; Coate, "Water, Power, and Politics in the Central Valley Project," p. 101.

14. Chapman to Ickes, Oct. 13, 1943, box 67, Oscar L. Chapman Papers, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Mo.; Ickes manuscript diary, April 29, 1945, p. 9678, Ickes Papers; On the decline of the New Deal during World War II see John Morton Blum, V Was for Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War II (New York, 1976), ch. 7-8; Richard S. Polenberg, War and Society: The United States, 1941-1945 (Philadelphia, 1972), ch. 3; Norman D. Markowitz, The Rise and Fall of the People's Century: Henry A. Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948 (New York, 1973), ch. 1-3; Richard Chapman, "Contours of Public Policy, 1939-1945" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1976); and Clayton R. Koppes and Gregory D. Black, "What to Show the World: The Office of War Information and Hollywood, 1942-1945," Journal of American History, LXIV (June 1977), 87--105. On the attempt to revive the New Deal in 1945-1946 see Mary H. Blewitt, "Roosevelt, Truman, and the Attempt to Revive the New Deal," in Alonzo L. Hamby, ed., Harry S. Truman and the Fair Deal (Lexington, Mass., 1974), 78-92. Besides illustrating congressional opposition, Blewitt provides ample evidence of Truman's slowness and lack of zeal in reviving the New Deal.

15. Abe Fortas, "Relationship of Power to Reclamation," Reclamation Era, XXXI (December 1941), 312; Ickes to Truman, Nov. 23, 1945, OF 360, Harry S. Truman Papers, HSTL; House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Department, Hearings, Investigation of the Bureau of Reclamation, 80th Cong., 2d. Sess. (Washington, 1948), pp. 1321-1324; Charles Coate, "Seventy-Five Years of the Bureau of Reclamation: An Assessment," paper read at Western History Association annual meeting, Portland, Oregon, Oct. 13, 1977.

16. Forsling to Ickes, Jan. 14, 1946, Chapman to Secretary, Feb. 21, 1946, File 6-2, RG 48, NA; Warner Gardner to Chapman, Feb. 27, 1946, box 3, Warner Gardner Papers, HSTL; Richard A. Cooley, Politics and Conservation: The Decline of the Alaska Salmon (New York, 1963), pp. 31-35, 47-68.

17. Charles E. Jackson to Ickes, March 16, 1944, File 3-4, RG 48; Evelyn Cooper to C. Girard Davidson, April 30, 1946, box 95, Joel D. Wolfsohn Files, RG 49, NA.

18. Ickes to Truman, Feb. 12, 1946, Truman to Ickes, Feb. 15, 1946, OF 6, HSTL; Ickes manuscript diary, Sept. 9, 1944, pp. 9209-9210, Jan. 20, 1946, p. 10,283, Feb. 10, 1946, pp. 10,340-10,345, Feb. 17, 1946, p. 10,355, Ickes Papers; Clinton P. Anderson with Milton Viorst, Outsider in the Senate (New York, 1970), pp. 76-77; Hamby, Beyond the New Deal, pp. 71-74; Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, vol. 1, Year of Decisions (2 vol., Garden City, N.Y., 1955), pp. 553-555; Margaret Truman, Harry S. Truman (New York, 1973), pp. 290-291; author's interviews with William E. Warne, Sacramento, Calif., Dec. 30, 1973, and Warner W. Gardner, Washington, D. C.

19. Warner W. Gardner oral history interview, pp. 30, 60, HSTL; Krug to Chapman, Nov. 17, 1947, box 76, Krug Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division; William A. Brophy to John Evans, April 2, 1946, box 16, William A. Brophy Papers, HSTL; David Lilienthal, The Journals of David E. Lilienthal, vol. 2, The Atomic Energy Years, 1945-1950 (5 vol., New York, 1964), pp. 6, 25; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, pp. 20-22; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Removal of War Production Board Controls on Business, 1944-1946," Business History Review, XXXIX (1965), 244-247; author's interview with Chapman, Washington, D.C., Aug. 15, 1973. For one diagnosis of the reasons for Krug's absences see Drew Pearson, ed. by Tyler Abell, The Diaries of Drew Pearson, 1949-1959 (New York, 1974), p. 92.

20. "Minutes of a Meeting of Livestock Representatives from the Eleven Western States with Secretary Krug, at Salt Lake City, Utah, Hotel Newhouse, September 3, 1947," p. 62, File 6-2, RG 48, NA; Rex L. Nicholson, "Reorganization Plan No. 3 as Proposed to J. A. Krug, Secretary of the Interior, Nov. 12, 1946," box 27, Chapman Papers, HSTL; Russell Thorp to Ralph Campbell, March 6, 1942, box 67, Joseph O'Mahoney Papers, Western History Collection, Coe Library, University of Wyoming, Laramie; Forsling to Arthur Carhart, March 13, 1947, box 74, Arthur Carhart Papers, Conservation Library, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colo.; transcripts of telephone conversations between Krug and Nicholson, Oct. 17, 1946, and Krug and Chapman, Sept. 23, 25, 1946, Feb. 7, 1947, box 48, Krug Papers, LC; Peffer, Closing of the Public Domain, ch. xvi-xvii.

21. Gardner to Chapman, Feb. 27, 1946, Interior Department press release, March 6, 1946, Krug to Arthur Vandenberg, June 11, 1947, box 3, Warner W. Gardner Papers, HSTL; Ernest L. Gruening, The State of Alaska (2nd ed., New York, 1968), pp. 395-398.

22. Transcripts of telephone conversations between Krug and Chapman, June 19, 1947, box 48, June 2, 1948, box 49, April 7, 1949, box 50, Krug Papers; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, p. 42; Chapman to Henry M. Jackson, March 14, 1947, box 105, Chapman Papers; Eleanor Roosevelt to Truman, June 12, 1947, OF 6P, HSTL; "Meeting to Consider Jackson Hole National Monument," March 5, 1947, Drury to Kenneth Chorley, Feb. 26, March 3, 21, May 29, 1947, box 4, Director's Personal File, Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives; Donald C. Swain, Wilderness Defender: Horace Albright and Conservation (Chicago, 1970), pp. 280-287.

23. House of Representatives, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, 80th Cong., 2nd Sess., Hearings, Investigation of Bureau of Reclamation, Department of the Interior, (Washington, 1947), pp. 2, 55, 145-200; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, ch. 1. The extent of Congressional opposition to administration measures is often overstated. The Eightieth Congress cut the Interior Department's budget request by only 12 percent, for example. Overall, as Susan M. Hartmann points out, the Eightieth Congress "testified remarkably to the acceptance of a large role for the Federal Government" in the economy and social welfare. See Susan M.

Hartmann, Truman and the 80th Congress (Columbia, Mo., 1971), pp. 143, 213. This measure of acquiescence by the Eightieth Congress presaged the attitude of the Eisenhower administration.

24. Thomas Sancton, "Gentle Crusader," Nation, CLXVI (March 5, 1949), 267; "Chapman for Krug," New Republic, CXXI (Nov. 21, 1949), 8; Hamby, Beyond the New Deal, p. 335; Clayton R. Koppes, "Oscar L. Chapman: A Liberal at the Interior Department, 1933-1953," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1974), ch. 1; author's interview with Chapman, Aug. 15, 1973.

25. Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 81st Cong., 2nd Sess., Nomination of Oscar L. Chapman To Be Secretary of the Interior (Washington, 1950), p. 6; Chapman speech to Americans for Democratic Action, Jan. 27, 1950, box 76, interview between Frank Burgholtzer and Chapman on National Broadcasting Company "Pro and Con" program, Sept. 16, 1949, box 75, Chapman Papers, HSTL.

26. Clark Clifford to Truman, Nov. 19, 1947, box 21, Clark Clifford Papers, HSTL; Truman to Irving Brant, Feb. 20, 1951, OF 284, HSTL; Public Papers of the Presidents: Truman, 1948 (Washington, 1964), passim, esp. pp. 531-535, 545-546; Ickes manuscript diary, Feb. 9, 18, April 2, 1950.

27. Truman, Memoirs, vol. 2, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 264, 266; Hamby, Beyond the New Deal, pp. 297-303; Blum, V Was for Victory, pp. 323-332; Leon H. Keyserling, "Deficiencies of Past Programs and Nature of New Needs," in Seymour E. Harris, ed., Saving American Capitalism (New York, 1948), 81-95; David E. Lilienthal, Big Business: A New Era (New York, 1952), esp. ch. 1; John Kenneth Galbraith, American Capitalism (Boston, 1952).

28. Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 81st Cong., 1st and 2nd Sess., Hearings, Columbia River Basin (Washington, 1950), p. 88; Krug to Straus, May 6, 1949, box 28, Program Staff Central Files, RG 48, NA; Benton J. Stong to Chapman, May 18, 1950, File 1-318, RG 48, NA; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, pp. 32, 36-38.

29. Coate, "Water, Power, and Politics in the Central Valley Project," pp. 167-179.

30. Chapman to Richard Welch, May 14, 1947, box 106, Chapman Papers; Paul S. Taylor to Frank McCulloch, Dec. 29, 1952, Jan. 4, 1953, Paul Douglas to Taylor, Jan. 23, 1953, Chapman to Douglas, Jan. 17, 1953, 26.3 Case File Correspondence, Paul H. Douglas Papers, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois; Chapman to Straus, Dec. 23, 1952, Fred A. Clarenbach to Files, Feb. 3, 1953, Straus for Record, Feb. 6, 1953, Alfred C. Wolf to Fred Aandahl, March 19, 1953, box 1, Program Staff Central Files,

RG 48, NA; Paul S. Taylor, "The Excess Land Law: Execution of a Public Policy," Yale Law Journal, LXIV (Feb. 1955), 506; Paul S. Taylor, California Social Scientist, oral history interview, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, vol. II, p. 234. Some critics objected that 160 acres (or 320 acres for couples in community-property states) was too small to support a family adequately. Under the intensive farming practices in the Central Valley, where the attack was strongest, however, the area was clearly adequate. Even had it been too small, some higher limit that left the redistributive purpose intact would have been feasible. But most critics who charged 160 acres was too small opposed any limit.

31. John Ise, Our National Park Policy: A Critical History (Baltimore, 1961), pp. 489-511.

32. Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, ch. 3; Owen Stratton and Philip Sirotkin, The Echo Park Controversy (University, Alabama, 1959).

33. Chapman to Arthur Carhart, Nov. 6, 1951, box 122, Thomas to Chapman, June 13, 1950, box 85, Chapman Papers, HSTL; Warne to Chapman, June 8, 1950, Chapman to Straus and Drury, June 27, 1950, File 8-3, RG 48, NA.

34. Chapman address to National Audubon Society, Nov. 13, 1951, box 77, Chapman Papers; Chapman to Arthur Watkins, Nov. 21, 1951, File 8-3, RG 48; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, pp. 150-152.

35. Chapman to Truman, Oct. 8, 1951, box 122, Chapman to Paul J. Raver and Harold T. Nelson, Jan. 21, 1952, box 123, Chapman Papers; Ickes manuscript diary, Dec. 17, 1950; Udall v. Federal Power Commission, 387 U.S. 428 at 450.

36. Roosevelt quoted in Blum, The Republican Roosevelt, p. 17; Harold K. Steen, The U. S. Forest Service: A History (Seattle, 1976), pp. 269-271, 274; William Voigt Jr., Public Grazing Lands: Use and Misuse by Industry and Government (New Brunswick, N.J., 1976), pp. 132-148; Nash, United States Oil Policy, pp. 185, 190, 208; Phyllis R. DeLuna, "Public Versus Private Power During the Truman Administration: A Study of Fair Deal Liberalism" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1974), pp. 547-581; Charles McKinley, "The Impact of American Federalism upon the Management of Land Resources," in Arthur W. MacMahon, ed. Federalism: Mature and Emergent (New York, 1962), pp. 321-323.

37. Coates, "Seventy-Five Years of the Bureau of Reclamation"; Electrical World, CLVII (Feb. 26, 1962), 59; Richardson, Dams, Parks & Politics, pp. 196-198; Ivanhoe Irrigation District v. McCracken, 357 U.S. 275.

The only overall study of conservation during the Eisenhower administration interprets it as a wholesale retreat because it mistakenly assumes that the New Deal conservation program remained intact throughout the Truman period. See George Van Dusen, "Politics of 'Partnership': The Eisenhower Administration and Conservation, 1952-1960" (Ph.D. dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago, 1973). Much of Van Dusen's evidence (see, for instance the discussion of public domain management, pp. 252-254) actually sustains an interpretation of continuity between Truman and Eisenhower.

Public power is sometimes cited as one of the principal differences between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, but this dichotomy fails to hold under closer scrutiny. Leuchtenburg and Hamby, for instance, call public power one of the "substantial" accomplishments of the Fair Deal legislative program. (Leuchtenburg, "A Troubled Feast," p. 673, and Hamby, Beyond the New Deal, p. 515.) Gary Reichard finds Ike's "partnership" program "almost unerringly conservative" and argues that "the years 1953-1954 witnessed the end of an era of active government involvement in the development of the country's natural resources" (The Reaffirmation of Republicanism: Eisenhower and the Eighty-Third Congress [Knoxville, Tenn., 1975], pp. 234, 149). Richardson is more cautious about the changes in resource policy (Dams, Parks & Politics, esp. pp. 115, 124). Historians who hold to the Truman-Eisenhower dichotomy have tended to focus on specific cases, such as Ike's rejecting a federal dam in Hells Canyon, without considering the overall picture, which clearly shows an expansion of federal power development. In any case the more significant point was not so much whether projects were done under federal, state, or private auspices but how the products were distributed; here the Eisenhower administration accepted the Truman settlement on transmission lines and related matters with little change.

Some might consider the federal attempt to assert federal control over the off-shore oil lands from the late 1930s to 1953 to be the major exception to the similarity of Truman and Eisenhower resource policies, since the Republicans turned the "tidelands" over to the states in 1953. By the late 1940s, however, the tide-

lands question was no longer a structural issue, if it had ever been one. Chapman based his defense of federal ownership on national security criteria. During the Korean War he attempted, without legal authority, to start a leasing program in order to begin oil production, but retreated quickly when Congress objected. Both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations favored rapid exploitation of the resource by private oil companies. (Koppes, "Oscar L. Chapman," pp. 394-416).

38. Fred Seaton radio address, Sept. 13, 1958, Window Rock, Ariz., Seaton Papers, Eisenhower Library; Koppes, "From New Deal to Termination"; Koppes, "Oscar L. Chapman," ch. 6.

39. Charles C. Alexander, Holding the Line: The Eisenhower Era, 1952-1961 (Bloomington, Ind., 1975), pp. 38-42.